Distr.
GENERAL

IDB.21/22
6 May 1999

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Industrial Development Board

Twenty-first session
Vienna, 23-25 June 1999
Item 11 of the provisional agenda

PREPARATIONS FOR THE EIGHTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

Report by the Director-General

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For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.

V.99-83905 (E)

Introduction

1. The General Conference of UNIDO is the principal organ of the Organization, consisting of representatives of all Members (Articles 7.1 and 8.1 of the Constitution). The main functions of the Conference are stipulated in Article 8.3 of the Constitution. In particular, the Conference should determine the guiding principles and the policies of the Organization. Unless it decides otherwise, the Conference is to hold a regular session every two years, at the seat of the Organization (Article 8.2). The last regular session (seventh) of the Conference was held in Vienna from 1 to 5 December 1997.

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Date and place of the Conference

2. At its seventh session, in decision GC.7/Dec.21, the General Conference decided that its eighth session should be held in Vienna from 29 November to 3 December 1999. In this connection, as for the seventh session, the Austrian Federal Government has placed at the disposal of UNIDO conference facilities at the Austria Center Vienna (ACV) free of charge for meetings that cannot be accommodated by the conference facilities of the Vienna International Centre.

B. Office space for delegations

3. Office space for delegations and their permanent missions required during the eighth session of the Conference can be rented in the ACV. Delegations wishing to rent such offices are invited to contact, as soon as possible, Ms. Alice Baar, Director of Organization Department, ACV (telephone 260 69 ext. 2323).

C. Budgetary matters

4. The resources available for the holding of the eighth session of the Conference, as provided for in the programme and budgets of UNIDO, 1998-1999, total $1,563,400. The budget of the Conference is based on the following assumptions:

(a) The eighth session will last five working days providing for 10 plenary meetings, five main committee meetings and five geographical group meetings;

(b) Interpretation for plenary and main committee meetings and documentation will be provided in six languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish);

(c) Summary records, which will be provided for plenary meetings as well as meetings of the main committee, will be issued—to the extent possible—in English during the session and the other five languages will be issued as soon as possible after the session.

D. Agenda

5. In accordance with Article 9.4 (g) of the Constitution, the Board prepares the provisional agenda for each session of the General Conference. Rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the Conference provides guidelines for the contents of the provisional agenda of a regular session of the Conference. Furthermore, in accordance with rule 12 of those rules of procedure, the Board shall prepare that provisional agenda on the basis of a list of items submitted to it by the Director-General.

6. Annotations indicating briefly the history of each item, the proposed documentation, the substance of the matter to be discussed and earlier relevant decisions by the Conference or other organs of the Organization will be issued following the twenty-first session of the Board.

7. The draft provisional agenda for the eighth session of the Conference is contained in the annex to the present document.

E. Documentation

8. In accordance with rule 23 of the rules of procedure of the Conference, documents required for consideration of items on the provisional agenda shall be distributed by the Director-General in all languages of the Conference to all recipients of the provisional agenda, as far as possible at the same time as the provisional agenda (ninety days before the opening date) and in any event not later than forty-five days before the opening date of a regular session.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE

9. During the eighth session of the Conference, it is planned to hold a forum on industrial development that would enable Member States to express their views on the subject of industrial development within a broader context. The forum would replace the traditional general debate held during sessions of the Conference and would provide an opportunity for high-level participants to communicate their views on a specific topic related to industrialization.

10. In addition, it will be recalled that, at its previous sessions, the Conference established a main committee to which it allocated a number of agenda items. The Board may wish to recommend to the Conference a similar procedure for its eighth session, keeping in mind that the possibility of creating additional committees is constrained by the limited resources available (see para. 4

above). Items 7 to 19 of the draft agenda would also be referred to the main committee for a more focused debate aimed at the preparation of consensus draft decisions and resolutions for submission to the plenary. With the schedule below, there would be no overlap of plenary and main committee, thus enabling all delegations to participate in both elements of the Conference.

Draft provisional schedule for the eighth session of the General Conference

29 November		
a.m.	1st plenary meeting	Opening of session; consideration of agenda items 1-5
p.m.	2nd plenary meeting	Opening of forum on industrial development; agenda item 9
30 November		
a.m.	3rd plenary meeting	Agenda item 9
p.m.	4th plenary meeting	Agenda item 9; closure of forum on industrial development
1 December		
a.m. and p.m.	Main Committee	Consideration of draft decisions/ resolutions on agenda items 7-19
2 December		
a.m. and p.m.	Main Committee	Consideration of draft decisions/ resolutions on agenda items 7-19
3 December		
a.m.	5th plenary meeting	Adoption of draft decisions/ resolutions emanating from the Main Committee and others
p.m.	6th plenary meeting	Adoption of draft decisions/ resolutions emanating from the Main Committee and others; closure of the General Conference

11. The work of the previous sessions of the Conference was also greatly facilitated by setting up, under the guidance of the President of the Board, informal consultations for the preparation of the Conference. Such an informal group, composed of representatives of permanent missions to UNIDO in Vienna, has met prior to previous Conferences and has prepared a report to the Conference containing recommendations that cover most of the items on the agenda as well as organizational matters.

III. ACTION REQUIRED OF THE BOARD

12. The Board may wish to consider adopting the following decision:

"The Industrial Development Board:

"(a) Takes note of the information provided in document IDB.21/22;

"(b) Adopts the following agenda for the eighth session of the General Conference:

[...]

"(c) Agrees to hold a forum on industrial development within the framework of the General Conference (provisional agenda item 9);

"(d) Recommends to the Conference that items 7 to 19 of the provisional agenda be allocated to a main committee of the Conference;

"(e) Recommends that, in the light of experience gained in the preparation of previous sessions of the Conference, the President of the twenty-first session of the Industrial Development Board conduct informal consultations for the preparation of the eighth session of the Conference."

Annex

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE, EIGHTH SESSION

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers:
   (a) Election of the President;
   (b) Election of other officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Organization of work.
5. Credentials of representatives to the Conference.
6. Elections to organs:
   (a) Industrial Development Board;
   (b) Programme and Budget Committee.
7. Reports of the Industrial Development Board on the work of its nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first regular sessions.
8. Annual reports of the Director-General on the activities of the Organization for 1997 and 1998.
9. Forum on industrial development.
10. Policy framework of UNIDO.
11. Financial matters:
   (a) Financial situation of UNIDO;
   (b) Audit-related matters;
   (c) Adjustments to the programme and budgets for the 1998-1999 biennium;
   (d) Scale of assessments of Member States;
   (e) Working Capital Fund;
   (f) Appointment of external auditor.
12. Mobilization of financial resources for UNIDO programmes (including Industrial Development Fund).
13. Medium-term programme framework, 2000-2003.
14. Programme and budgets, 2000-2001.
15. Development of human resources for industry.
16. Industrialization of the least developed countries.
17. The regional dimension:
   (a) Africa (in particular the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa);
   (b) Arab countries programme, including technical assistance to the Palestinian people;
   (c) Asia and the Pacific;
   (d) Latin America and the Caribbean.
18. Personnel matters, including United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund.
19. Matters related to intergovernmental, non-governmental, governmental and other organizations.
20. Date and place of the ninth session.
21. Closure of the session.

Other items for possible inclusion in the provisional agenda

Field representation
Europe and NIS